Mr. Christopher Hanson
Hearst Papers
1701 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, # 610
Washington, DC 20006

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Dear Chris,

My reading the current Columbia Journalism review coincides with my reading the page proofs of my Posner book, Case Open. I do not recall whether we discussed it when you were here but the thrust of my work is that in the time of the great crisis of the JFK assassination and ever since all of our institutions failed and continue to fail themselves and the rest of us. Most of all the press. Of the many to me shocking examples of this the most serious was with the Posner book.

I've been sent many stories, interviews, a few transcripts of his TV appearances and a fair number of reviews. Not a single reporter did any checking of anything at all. Not one in any interview asked him any serious question, not a single one in all the many stories of which I have copies. His lying was blatant, and not a single reporter reflected any awareness of it. At the very least I would have believed that at least one of the many who interviewed him would have wondered how so youthful a looking man could possibly be what he and his publisher boast he is, a "Wall Street lawyer." A Lexis check does not connect him with a single lawsuit. He spent two years or less with the Cravath firm doing the most menial work, on discovery in an IBM case. I have a friend who did that with the ink on her bachelor's degree still fresh, for Westinghouse.

My manuscript of 200,000 words or more had most of the chapters eliminated but what remains is a strong and irrefutable case proving, among other things, to quote myself, that the man has trouble telling the truth even by accident. The man is a brazen thief and a liar and the most cursory check would have disclosed that. But nobody in any media element did any real checking. I know of only two of the very many who caught what is obvious, that he used Failure Analysis' work for the bar association mock trial as his work. So persuasively that the Philadelphia Inquirer wrote an editorial praising him for it. Yet when Jeffrey Frank, in a Post review, having been informed by Lardner, indicated this rather mildly, Posner wrote and the Post printed a shyster's lie denying it. Patricia Holt, in the San Francisco Chronicle, having been tipped off by someone I know, did the same thing.

The deliberateness of the permeating dishonesty of the whole thing led me to limit myself in addressing what he did to what is public domain. Or, to what was readily available to any reporter or paper that did any checking at all.

The basis of his rather successful formula for exploiting and commercializing that tragedy is his straightforward statement that Oswald was a born assassin who spent his life awaiting his moment in history. His sole source is what he says is the testimony

of a New York shrink, Renatus Hartogs, to the Warren Commission. Posner's end notes include the pages and the volume. If a single reporter did what I did, check Hartogs' testimony, he would have found that, at precisely where Posner says he testified to what Posner wrote, he would have found that when asked that very questions. Hartogs replied that his examination did not disclose that at all. (Sorry about my typing. As you may remember, it can't be any better.)

If anyone on any paper had consulted his morgue, on many papers he would have learned that Hartogs was proven in court to be one of those shrinks who used his women patients for free sex.

I could go on and on. This is a fair sample.

Beginning with U.S.News devoting a major part of an issue, including the cover, to it just about all the media raved about him and his book. Throughout the world, too. I was sent a section of an outback Australian newspaper that devoted three pages to it! Newsday gave it four pages. That reporter, Jack Sirica, told by Posner that to do his book he had to index the Warren Commission's 26 volumes, with all else Posner says he did in little more than a year, never asked to see that index. It cannot exist. In a little more than a year at most one could index 10,000,000 words? Even without all else he said he did? Like conducting some 200 interviews and all that travel?

The abdication is virtually total. And that is the media record on the assassination and on its official investigations.

I have yet to see it reported, by the way, as I brought to light in my first book, which dates to mid-February 1965, that the FBI and the Secret Service do not agree with the Warren Commission's conclusions on the shooting.

I hope that with the book to provide a basis for it at long last some reporter or editor will face the failure of the media when confronted with what I believe is the most subversive of crimes, the assassination of a President.

In most if not all instances my manuscript file includes xeroxes of what Posner's book says and of the official evidence, like with Hartogs above and with much of the fact of the assassination.

I hope also that some still reporting, as I have not since I entered the Army in World War II, will wonder what kind of shape we are in, how our press works, when on so significant an issue, it is virtually an arm of errant government, with its only critical faculties misdirected against those who raised the questions the press should have raised and tried to answer.

If you or anyone you know is interested, I'll try to get an advance copy of a set of proofs. All I have will be available, as will our copier.

Best wishes,

Harold

Harold Weisberg